

**Module 3: Access to the
General Education Curriculum**

August 2010

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Related Readings

- Cortiella, C. (2008). Understanding the standards-based IEP. *Advocacy Brief*, National Center for Learning Disabilities.
- Clayton, J., Burdge, M., Denham, A., Kleinert, H. L., & Kearns, J. (2006). A four step process for accessing the general curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 38(5), 20-27.

http://www.opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/MontCAS Presents.html?gpm=1_3

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A Recap of the “BIG” Ideas

- The concept of access to the general education curriculum, first introduced in IDEA 1997, far exceeds the earlier definition of access and goes beyond the concepts of mainstreaming and inclusion.



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- Standards-Based IEPs provide a means of ensuring that students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum

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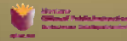


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- The general curriculum has come to be influenced to a great extent by the adoption of national, state and district standards.



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Questions to Organize this Discussion



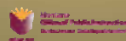
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- What *is* the general curriculum?
- What does it mean to deliver standards-based instruction to students with disabilities?
- How is this different from what I am already doing?
- How can students access the general education curriculum when they are not performing at grade level?
- What about students whose current curriculum is focused on functional skills?

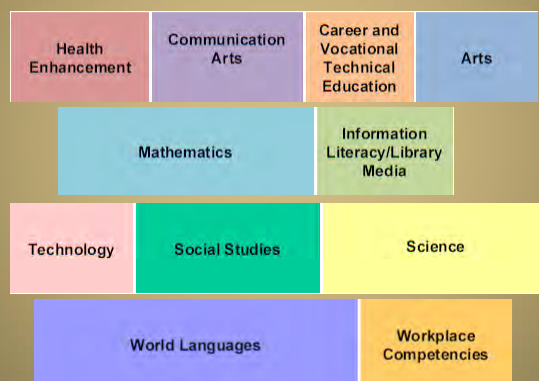
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The General Curriculum.....

Defined as “the same curriculum as that established for students without disabilities” (34 C.F.R. § 300.347(a)(1)(i).



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Access to the General Education Curriculum

Access to the general curriculum “basically means that education planning for students with disabilities has as its foundation the curriculum being taught within the district and that curriculum be presented at a level and in a manner in which students with disabilities can acquire the content” (Hehir, 1999).

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Traditional vs. Standards Based Practices

Traditional

1. Select a topic from the curriculum
2. Provide instruction
3. Assess
4. Grade
5. Move on to new topic

Standards Aligned

1. Assess on standards
2. Select topic from assessment
3. Provide multiple learning opportunities
4. Assess on standards
5. Re-teach, give feedback, or move to next standard

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Madfes & Muench, 2004

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The Prevailing Model of Special Education

- Views students needs and abilities independent of the general education curriculum
- Evaluations/identification of needs lead to goals and objectives to address areas of deficit

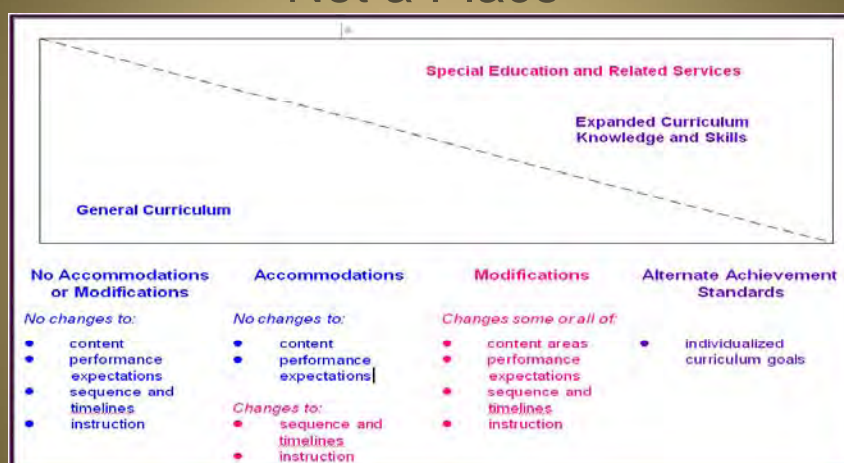


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Special Education is a Service, Not a Place



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Nolet & McLaughlin, 2005, pg. 14

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Access to the General Education Curriculum requires partnerships between general and special educators



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Standards-Based Instruction and Special Education



How do these concepts fit together?

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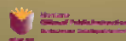


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The IEP is the document that brings these two concepts into alignment



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IDEA: IEPS Must Include:

A statement describing the impact of the child's disability on their involvement and progress in the general curriculum;

A statement of measurable goals to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum; and

A statement of the services, program modification, or supports for school personnel necessary for the child to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum (34 CFR § 300.320.)

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Present Level of Performance (PLOP)/ Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

STUDENT'S NAME: Betty

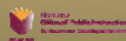
AREA: Math

PRESENT LEVEL OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE:

Betty has not attained all of the third grade content standards in math. She is able to compare (M.3.1.1) and order numbers (M.3.1.2) less than 100, solve addition and subtraction problems and simple word problems (M.3.2). She has difficulty working problems involving spatial relationships and geometric patterns. Betty's lack of knowledge in the areas of spatial and geometric relationships negatively affects achieving grade-level math geometry standards.

<http://alex.state.al.us/specialed/standardsbasedieps.html>

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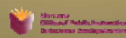
Measurable Annual Goals

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOAL related to meeting the student's needs:

At the end of 36 weeks, Betty will identify geometric representations for points, lines, perpendicular lines, parallel lines, angles and rays (M.3.8) on weekly classroom tests an average of 9 out of 10 times.

- Goals should reflect the necessary learning that will lead to a curriculum standard rather than restating the standard.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICE(S): (Special Education, Supplementary Aids and Services, Program Modifications, Accommodations Needed for Assessments, Related Services, Assistive Technology, and Support for Personnel.)				
Type of Service(s)	Anticipated Frequency of Service(s)	Amount of time	Beginning/Ending Date	Location of Service(s)
Special Education Special ed and general ed teachers will plan lessons and activities using the Curriculum Guide: Mathematics.	1 time daily	30 mins	08/14/02008 to 05/26/2009	General education classroom
Supplementary Aids and Services Betty needs extra time for classroom assignments and a peer helper to assist with classroom activities.	5 times daily	55 mins	08/14/2008 to 05/26/2009	General education classroom
Program Modifications			_____ to _____	
Accommodations Needed for Assessments Betty will receive study guides for tests and extended time on tests.	5 times daily	55 mins	08/14/2008 to 05/26/2009	General education classroom
Related Services			_____ to _____ _____ to _____	
Assistive Technology			_____ to _____	
Support for Personnel			_____ to _____	19

At the IEP Meeting.....



- Have the general education teacher(s) at the IEP table.
- Have the Montana Standards Framework available.
- As each weakness noted in the present level of performance is discussed, determine how it will impact the student in being able to access the general curriculum.

What about students with greater skill differences?

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What Does this Look Like in Practice?

- All students having the opportunity to learn academic content
- Less complex and/or more specifically focused performance of skills encompassed in grade level achievement standards

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Grade Level Curriculum + Expectations = Alignment

Students with significant cognitive disabilities:

- receive instruction on grade level standards (may be at a lower complexity level) within the context of grade level curriculum ensuring that the intent of the grade level standard remains intact.
- use the same materials or adapted version of the materials, and appropriate assistive technology to gain access.



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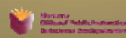
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Student Vignette: Victoria

- Is a student with a significant cognitive disability
- Is nonverbal with emerging skills in communication and uses a wheelchair for mobility
- Has limited use of her upper extremities and utilizes assistive technology to demonstrate learning

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Content Area - Reading

- Standard: Students will use a variety of strategies to understand what they read.
- 8th Grade Level Standard: Make predictions, draw conclusions, and make generalizations about what is read.
- Curriculum materials: *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Dial Taylor

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Grade Level Curriculum + Expectations = Alignment

- Victoria is provided with a prerecorded summary of each chapter so that she can listen when she activates a tape recorder with a switch
- She then uses an custom overlay on an adapted keyboard to *predict* whether a described character will be friendly with the Logan children and after reading the selection will match the character to the correct interaction
- She will be given picture choices to *draw conclusions* about underlying cause(s) of the family's difficulties

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Excerpt of the summary that Victoria listens to and a picture of her switch:

- Cassie Logan had 3 brothers, Stacey, Christopher John, and Little Man. They live on a big 400 acre farm. Their family still owes money and have to pay taxes. Their papa leaves home each year to find work to pay for the farm...



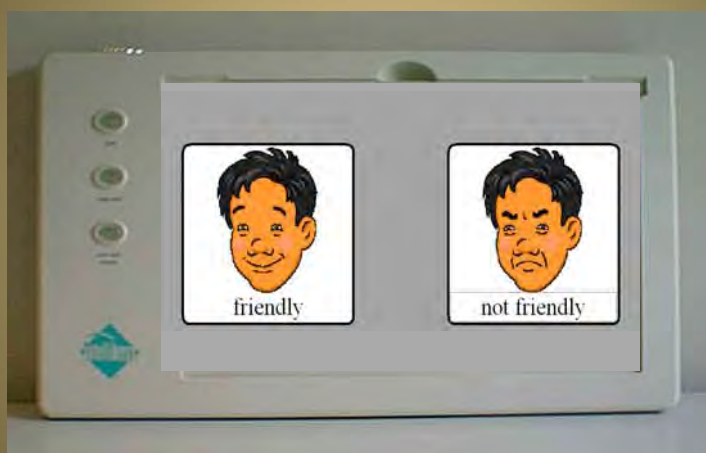
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Overlay and adapted keyboard Victoria uses to predict and check predictions:



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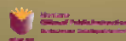


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Pictures for Victoria to choose from that represent her opinion of why the Logan family was having a hard time.

 <p>They were poor.</p>	 <p>They lived on a farm.</p>
 <p>They were not white.</p>	 <p>They wanted to be treated the same.</p>

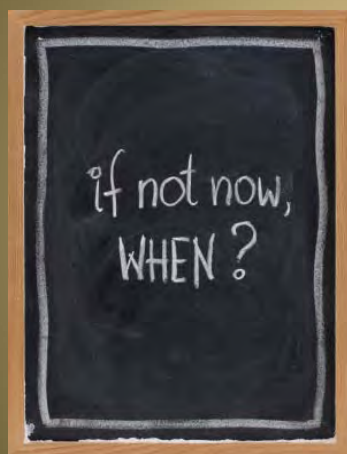
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High Expectations for All!!



“Ready” means “never” if we continually focus on the lowest-level skills” (McLaughlin, 2009, pg. 4).

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References

- Hehir, T. (1999). Begin early, End well. *The School Administrator*, 56, 24-26.
- Clayton, J., Burdge, M., Denham, A., Kleinert, H., & Kearns, J. (2006). A four-step process for accessing the general curriculum for students with disabilities *Teaching significant cognitive disabilities. Exceptional Children*, 38(5), 20-27
- Karger, J., & Hitchcock, C. (2003). *Access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities. A brief legal interpretation*. National Center on Access the General Education Curriculum. Retrieved online at: http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_accesslegal.html.
- Madfes, T. J., & Muench, A. (2004). *Learning from assessment: Tools for examining assessment through standards*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.
- McLaughlin, M. (2009). Standards and students with disabilities. Keys to creating standards-based IEPs. *The Special Edge*, 23(1), 1-6.
- Nolet, V., & McLaughlin, M. J. *Accessing the general curriculum. Including students with disabilities in standards-based reform* (second edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.